

Employment Related Services

March 2007

- *Research shows that increasing the wages of entry-level jobs can reduce the rate of welfare parents who return to the rolls and can affect the rate at which they advance in wages.*
- *The statewide average entry wage for TANF parents is \$8.86 an hour.*
- *Between December 1997 and September 2006, more than 178,000 parents have left welfare within 3 months of getting a job.*

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For more information about the WorkFirst program, visit www.workfirst.wa.gov

What are WorkFirst Employment Services?

Employment Services are a package of structured activities, usually provided by the Employment Security Department (ESD) that helps parents find and keep jobs. Employment services are a first step toward independence from TANF for most parents, and consist of:

- Employment Preparation
- Job Search (Employer contacts)
- When appropriate, a Work Experience or an On-the-Job Training position.

What is Employment Preparation?

Employment Preparation is the initial part of employment services. It is intended to immediately identify and immerse parents in activities designed to help them stay engaged in activities and build the skills to progress towards employment. It allows parents the opportunity to acquire the basic skills necessary to make the right job match. Employment Preparation involves on-going employment planning, a written schedule of daily participation activities, job search competencies; including interviewing techniques and work readiness workshops, and weekly progress evaluations.

What activities are available during Employment Preparation?

Employment Preparation activities include the following activities as appropriate:

- A review of the Work Skill Assessment completed during the Comprehensive Evaluation.
- Continued labor market research started during the Comprehensive Evaluation.
- Ongoing updates to the Employment Plan completed during the Comprehensive Evaluation.
- Development of an Activity Planner identifying daily participation activities.
- Completion of Employment Competencies that include:
 - Resume
 - Master Application
 - Interviewing
 - 60 Second Commercial
- At least weekly progress evaluations.

What is Job Search (Employer contacts)?

When parents have completed Employment Preparation activities and they are ready to begin making employer contacts the following services are provided:

- One-on-one sessions with an employment counselor at least once a week to discuss job search efforts and plan future job search activities.
- Update of the Activity Planner (at least weekly).
- Employment Planning and goal setting.
- As appropriate referrals to training options.

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- Work Experience opportunities.
- On-The-Job Training.
- Automated matching of parents to job openings currently available.
- Hiring events, matching employers with qualified applicants.
- Job development and employer outreach services.
- Support services, such as transportation expenses, job search clothing or minor car repairs.
- Access to and assistance in resource rooms (Internet, telephones, copiers, fax machines, etc.).
- Child care in support of job search and employment.